of letters received by the Prime Minister from the Members of Parliament from 1.7.1991 to 29.2.1992 was 6412. Out of these, the Prime Minister's Office was required to take action on 1477 letters of them, 839 have been disposed of and 638 are pending. Information required for finalising the pending cases has been called for from different authorities and the individuals concerned.

In addition, there are some letters which are of purely routine nature, on which no specific action is to be taken. However, in all such cases acknowledgements are sent from the Prime Minister to the Members of Parliament concerned. All those letters from Members of Parliament on which action is required to be taken by other ministries/ departments are sent to them for examining them and sending appropriate replies to the Members of Parliament concerned.

Collaboration with General Electric Company of USA

4570. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any collaboration between M/s. General Electric Company of USA and Godrej and Boyce mamifacturing company for manufacturing refrigerators, washing machines and other goods to be set up at Malanpur in Madhya Pradesh has been cleared;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the factory is likely to be set up and started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): (a) to (c). The Government have recently approved a proposal for Joint Venture between M/s Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co. Ltd., Bombay and M/s General Electric of USA for manufacture of Refrigerators, Compressors, Washing Machines and other White Goods in a new unit in Malanpur (M.P.). M/s General Electric will participate in the equity of the new company to the extent of 40% and the balance equity of 60% will be held by M/s Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co. Ltd. M/s Godrej & Boyce have intimated that the completion of the factory will take approximately 24 months.

[*Translation*]

Committee for Patent Potentialities of Inventions

4571. SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted a committee to find out the patent potentialities of the inventions made in the field fo biotechnology;

(b) if so, whether the investigation in this regard has since been completed;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons for delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Not applicable.

(d) The developments in new biotechnology and their relationship to Intellectual Property Rights are of very recent origin and are still evolving. The Committee assessed the existing information with specific reference to biotechnological inventions in devel-

oping and developed countries. The study revealed that the scope of patenting is varied in nature among countries and it mainly covers the use of micro-organisms. Biotechnoiogical advances provide potential for patenting processes and products. The Indian Patents Act, 1970 excludes patentability of biological living products and materials. In order to evolve a satisfactory patenting provision in biotechnology for India, the Committee obtained the views of various public interest groups and industrial bodies in the country on inventions related to life forms. The work of the Committee is in progress.

[*English*]

Construction of Road under Dacoit Liquidation Scheme in Madhya Pradesh

4572. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh for according approval to the construction of 14 roads in the first phase and the construction of 61 roads in the second phase under the Dacoit Liquidation Scheme in 1984 and1985 respectively; and

(b) the stage at which the matter of according financial approvals to them stands at present and the likely time to be taken in giving approval to all the estimates of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI H. PATEL): (a) and (b). Under the Scheme for construction of roads in dacoity prone areas, estimates for construction of 14 roads in first phase and 61 roads in second phase had been included in the project report of the Government of Madhya Pradesh. Out of these, 14 roads including one from the second phase have been approved in 1985-86 and 1986-87 as per proposals sent by the State Government. All the works are in progress. A proposal for construction of another 10 roads was also received from Government of Madhya Pradesh. Administrative approval could not be accorded to the 10 roads due to unsatisfactory progress of works already sanctioned and for want of necessary clarification by the State Government. This scheme is proposed to be transferred to the state sector in 1992-93.

[*Translation*]

Linking of Tribal Areas with Metallic Roads

4573. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received cost estimates (Rs. 119.00 crores, year 1983) for granting technical and financial approval in regard to connect growth centres of tribal areas in Madhya Pradesh with the metallic roads;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government have accorded financial approval to the said estimates; and

(c) if not, the time by which it is likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI H. PATEL): (a) to (c). A Master Plan for construction of roads at an estimated cost of Rs. 199.22 crores was received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh in 1983. The State Government was, at that time, requested to send specific proposals in this regard. In 1983-84, the State Government sent proposals for the